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SUBJECT: BRAZZA IN BRIEF FOR OCTOBER 5, 2007

1. (U) Post celebrated the completion of a high school renovation by the U.S. Navy Seabees Detachment from Sigonella, Sicily. After thanking the Seabees, the Ambassador pointed out that this was the first cooperative effort between members of the U.S. and Congolese Armed Forces and that their success will lead to future projects. Post will provide additional information in follow-up report.

2. (U) Transparency: After more than two years of administrative procedures and delays, the RoC National Executive Secretariat and the Consultative Group (EITI), led by Michel OKOKO, Hydrocarbon Adviser to the Minister of Finances, announced the launch of the transparency initiatives mandated in accordance with the RoC's HPIC program with the IMF and in accordance with the World Bank. Mr. Okoko announced that the RoC is publishing revenues of what they are paid by oil companies. Under the EITI, the RoC will be required to retain an independent auditor, which they plan to do. RoC became a signatory to the EITI in January 2004.

3. (U) Cooperative agreements: Nicholas Norman, Ambassador of the Republic of France (RoF), announced that the RoF and RoC Document of Partnership (DCP) for the years 2007-2011 will concentrate on transportation infrastructure, focusing on the Ports of Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville and the management of the national railway. The second focal point will be education, specifically vocational training. Regarding health, the RoF will reinforce the capacities of the major hospital in Brazzaville and assist with the implementation of a medical insurance system.

4. And more agreements: Wo Ruidi, Republic of China Ambassador, signed an agreement with the RoC Ministry of Higher Education to finance the construction of a library at the Marien Ngouabi University; the cost is estimated at US\$4 million. Charles Bowao, a representative of the RoC Ministry of Cooperation, Humanitarian Action, and Solidarity, met with representatives of both Morocco and Norway to solidify investments. Morocco pledged US\$650,000 to finance as of yet unspecified projects in the RoC. No details were available of the meeting with the Norwegian delegation. A South Korean firm known as Core Mining Congo Ltd was given a license to mine iron ore in the northern Sangha area of RoC. Two locomotive cars made in China were donated to the Ministry of Transport; the two cars, estimated to cost US\$1,500,000 were jointly financed by the RoC national oil company and a Chinese company which is in charge of the construction of the power station of Imboulou. The Minister for Energy, Bruno Itoua, met with a delegation of Spanish businessmen led by David Querol Ballesta of Grupo Inmobiliario; this meeting was a sequel to meetings held in May 2007 in which the two parties discussed investment in small and medium-sized companies and the Congolese craft industry.

5. (U) Sudan: Mohamed Fadlalla, Republic of Sudan Honorary Consul, presented official documents to Aimi Clovis Guilloud, Director of Diplomatic Protocol and Consular Affairs, to establish a diplomatic presence in the RoC.

¶6. (U) Agricultural Loans: Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) announced that BDEAC will provide loans totaling US\$45,000 to two agricultural projects near Brazzaville. The funds are to be used to cultivate plants known for mineral and vitamin content to help fight various diseases such as anemia and diabetes.

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